



The Career Connect Washington Task Force focused on identifying actionable and effective steps to drive awareness of a wide range of educational pathways that lead to rewarding careers for Washington's young adults. Governor Inslee's Task Force recommends dramatically upscaling public and private registered apprenticeships, internships, mentoring, and workforce training programs to achieve a goal of serving 100,000 young people over the next five years.

FEBRUARY 2018

# CAREER CONNECT WASHINGTON TASK FORCE



Dear Governor Inslee,

Washington currently enjoys one of the fastest growing economies in the nation. But economic growth alone doesn't lead to opportunity. To keep up, businesses and government need to offer training opportunities for today's youth to fill the 740,000 job openings that are expected in our state over the next five years. The Career Connect Washington Task Force you created focused on how to increase the readiness of our state's young people to access these high-demand and high-wage careers, and **we fully support your goal of connecting 100,000 Washington youth with career-connected learning opportunities over the next five years.**

These job openings are not just because of an expanding economy or a wave of retirements. They are also due to the rapidly-changing set of skills these jobs require. Most will need a post-high school degree, certificate or training. Education and training systems must better align with the needs of employers, both in terms of the skills required and the pathways needed. This will require changes to our traditional education programs as well as the expansion of promising pathways such as registered apprenticeships and internships.

We recognize that just as there are different types of jobs, there are different avenues for filling them and preparing young people for work, including mentorship, registered apprenticeships, certificate programs, and college and university degrees. Ultimately, if our collective goal is to prepare youth for the great jobs in our state, we must celebrate and value students that pursue programs and pathways geared towards this effort.

We also need to be responsive to how the future of work is evolving, including the impact of technologies such as artificial intelligence. To both harness the opportunities, and tackle the challenges that technology offers, we need to do everything we can to offer the latest in modern learning opportunities including distance and online learning. We must also urge companies to recognize and value technical credentials for today's increasingly skills-based economy.

There remains a substantial gap in our state between those who have the needed skills, education, and work experience to move ahead and those who are increasingly left behind. We see this especially between the ages of 18-29. There are also critical gaps that need to be addressed when it comes to race, gender, and income. Even now, with low overall unemployment rates, youth, young adults, and people of color have significantly higher unemployment rates. Failing to close these gaps would harm our economy and be a serious disservice to tens of thousands of people in our state who want to find meaningful employment.

We must also acknowledge that the lack of work experience, or simply lack of exposure to the world of work, is a key reason young people lack employability skills. Internships, job shadows, registered apprenticeships, and other forms of career-connected learning can help young people gain these critical workplace skills. Private industry and labor can and must play a more in-depth and focused role in providing more options and on-the-job training.

We have a **call to action for employers** to help meet this goal. They can contribute to building a pipeline for a skilled workforce by:

- Supporting investments, awareness, and pathways for careers in health care, IT, advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and many other sectors.
- Expanding registered apprenticeships that allow young people to "earn while they learn," and move along a defined path to high-skill, high-wage work.
- Working with the education sector, as well as other companies, within an employer's industry and geographic region, to uniquely tailor career-connected learning education opportunities to match the needs of the local regional economy.

The work of the Task Force is only a first step. We need to expand and scale successful training programs, develop a long-term strategic plan, and ensure a career-connected learning experience for every student, in every area of the state.

Sincerely,



**Brad Smith**, Co-Chair Career Connect Washington  
President, Microsoft



**Perry England**, Co-Chair Career Connect Washington  
Chair, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
Vice President, MacDonald-Miller Facility Solutions



## INTRODUCTION

Governor Inslee created the Career Connect Washington Task Force in the spring of 2017, following a statewide summit on career-connected learning, with the charge to conduct an intensive review of how to better align education programs with career opportunities.

The Task Force's 21 members met five times in 2017 to discuss issues, brainstorm ideas, and consider recommendations. Members included leaders from business, labor, state government, non-profit organizations, and education. The Task Force was staffed by the state's Workforce Board.

Members reviewed best practices (international, national, and state), discussed barriers to the expansion of career-connected learning, and explored the needs of Washington's youth and the businesses that depend on a skilled and educated workforce.

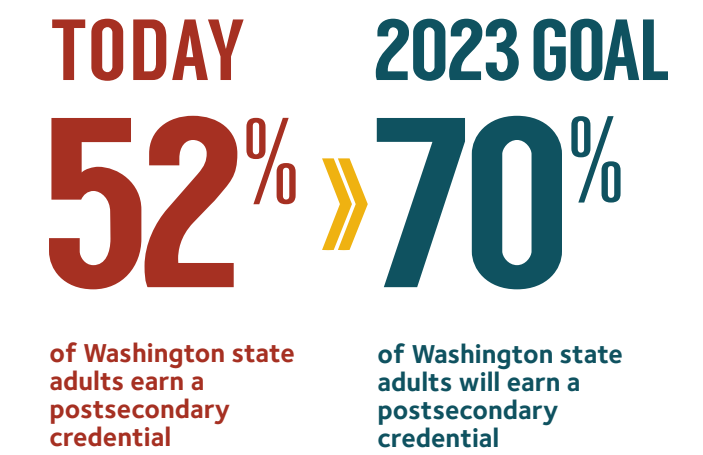
The Task Force studied a wide range of reports and materials and heard presentations provided by career-connected learning stakeholders, including experts from both secondary and postsecondary education, state government agencies, labor groups, business owners, and national and international apprenticeship experts.

The Task Force's recommendations, when fully implemented, will better connect Washington's young people with the education and training they need to pursue meaningful and rewarding careers – a win/win for young people who want great jobs, and for the employers who need skilled workers.



*“A young man was living in his car and making \$20,000 a year doing odd jobs, and after graduating from a 15 month registered apprenticeship program for high tech – is now employed and making \$105,000. That’s a career path!”*

–Michael Schutzler, CEO of the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA)



Source: Washington Student Achievement Council Roadmap



# TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

## 1. ENSURE EDUCATION PUTS STUDENTS ON A PATHWAY TO CAREERS:

Washington’s next-generation workforce will enter a vibrant, innovative, and swiftly changing economy. Our state education and talent development system needs to ensure it is sufficiently aligned so that students and reskilling workers can explore career options, limit duplication, relate their classroom experiences to future work-life, and embark upon a career pathway towards economic self-sufficiency.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

**Credential/Credit Portability and Acceleration:** Create a seamless system for assessing/recording credit, including offering dual credits, and improve credential attainment for transferability across educational institutions.

**Resource Middle School Career Exploration:** Ensure more CCL opportunities at the middle school level by providing resources for formal career exploration courses.

**Mapping Pathways:** Convene regional and state teams for industry sectors or occupations in high-demand areas to build on and refine mapping efforts, and to develop maps that anticipate technological and other transformations expected within the targeted industry sector. Start with high-demand, high-growth sectors to prioritize limited resources.

**Prepare Young People to Navigate Career Pathways:** Transform the foundational years of our education system by providing young people opportunities to explore careers and leverage 21st Century skills.

### FUTURE IMPACTS

Career readiness principles will be thoroughly embedded in the academic learning requirements at each grade level. Students will receive credit for prior learning and have more options for dual and cross-crediting, shortening the time to a meaningful credential.

Students will also explore and understand a wide range of careers/occupations, and the multiple education pathways that lead to them. Students recognize the link between their educational career and their occupational goals and will begin high school with a strong education plan that helps them prepare for career goals of their own creation, informed by the data the state has on hand regarding in-demand occupations. And industry will feel confident that they will have access to the talent they need, when they need it.



## 2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CCL PARTNERS:

Young people need access to more mentors – teachers, business leaders, administrators and counselors – who are ready, willing, and trained to help them explore, experience and navigate the career pathways available to them.

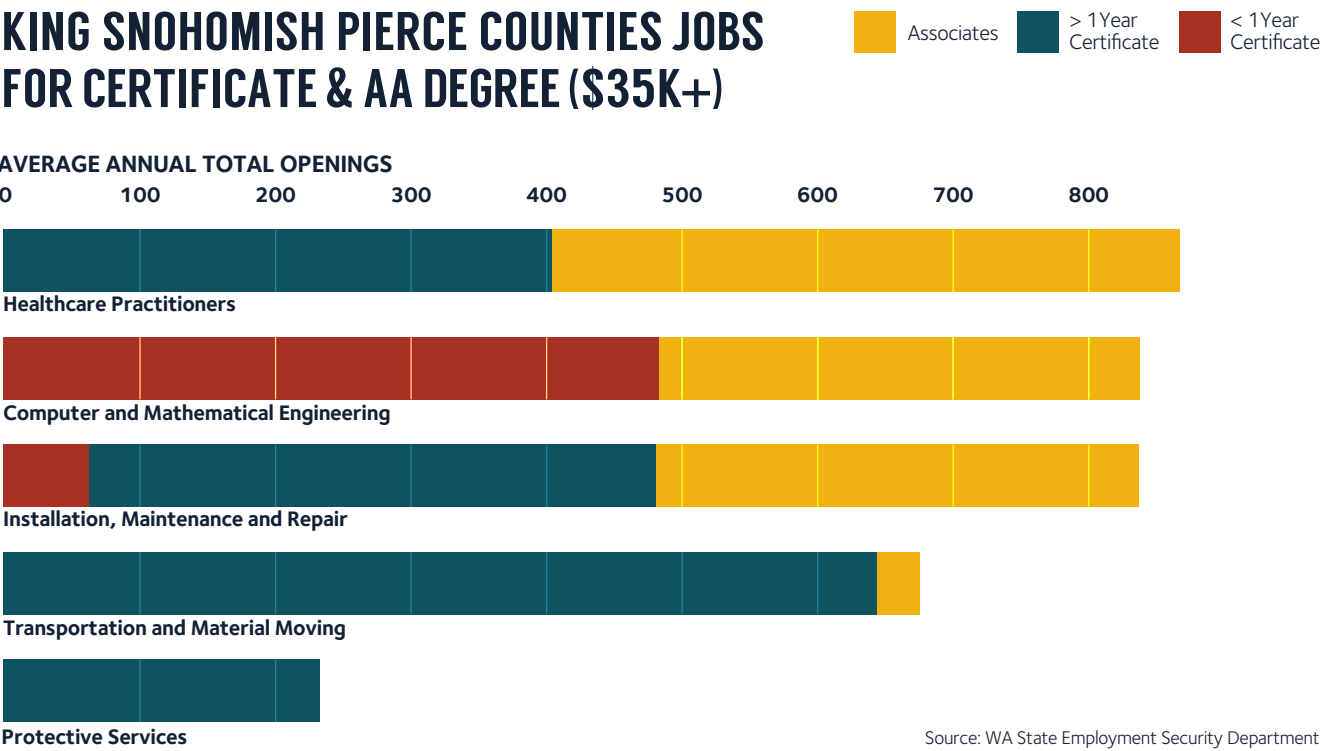
### RECOMMENDATIONS:

**Build Capacity of Education, Community, Labor and Industry Partners:** Support increased professional development of CCL partners, including mechanisms for evaluation, shared learning, and the development of tools and resources. Programs such as teacher externships build bridges between employers and the classroom, giving educators an opportunity to identify and master the specific skills and competencies in high-demand, high-wage industries. CCL partners should have access to relevant professional development resources in a single portal.

### FUTURE IMPACTS

Educators have the training and resources to integrate CCL into their curricula, infusing career readiness skills into traditional and non-traditional settings. Industry partners feel comfortable and confident as partners in the delivery of CCL opportunities.

## KING SNOHOMISH PIERCE COUNTIES JOBS FOR CERTIFICATE & AA DEGREE (\$35K+)



Source: WA State Employment Security Department



*“We are creating an exciting opportunity to leverage our existing facilities and teachers to help high school students discover an energy career path. Avista can reach into high schools and show how the math and science they are learning in the classroom becomes real when they help design an electrical or natural gas system for a neighborhood and work with a crew to implement it. It’s a win-win for our employees who are proud of what they do, and they can share their craft with the next generation.”*

-Scott Morris,  
Chair, President, and CEO – Avista Corp.



### 3. EXPAND REGISTERED PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS, APPRENTICESHIPS AND YOUTH APPRENTICESHIPS:

Registered apprenticeships are proven to provide a high return on investment for both jobseekers and employers.

Washington’s well-regarded registered apprenticeship system could seize opportunities for growth by:

- Making the public system navigable for employers, young people and educators.
- Devoting funding to support the creation of new registered apprenticeships for youth and adults, particularly in non-traditional fields.
- Creating tighter alignment with graduation requirements and pathways to degrees.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Support Expansion of Registered Pre-Apprenticeship, Apprenticeships and Youth Apprenticeships:

- Support the establishment of new registered apprenticeship programs.
- Incent co-investment from the public and private sectors by setting aside specific funding dedicated to related support instruction for registered apprenticeship programs in the community and technical college system, as well as in high schools and skills centers.

#### FUTURE IMPACTS

Washington will build on its strong registered apprenticeship system, for youth and adults, continually scaling up as employers become aware of the system’s supports and offerings, as well as the benefits to their workforce.

### 4. CAREER CONNECT WASHINGTON SYSTEM PLANNING:

Washington has many excellent CCL programs, but they need to be scaled up with more predictable funding to reach youth from underserved populations and communities. Often programs and policymakers rely on inconsistent, overlapping, or conflicting data to make decisions about program improvement, sustainability, and expansion.

CCL is most effective when industry is involved in designing, implementing, evaluating, and resourcing programs. It must be easier, cost effective, and more transparent for businesses to participate.

To begin building a systemic approach, Governor Inslee invested \$6.4 million in WIOA funds to build 11 local Career Connect teams. These teams include strong private sector leadership and take a systemic approach to reach 29,000 youth with CCL – including 5,000 internships and apprenticeships – in the next two years. But we need a plan to review success, adjust as needed, and continue on to the 100,000 goal.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Develop a Strategic Plan to Implement the Career Connect Washington Goal: Identify a special assistant to the Governor to oversee an inclusive planning process with stakeholders that includes:

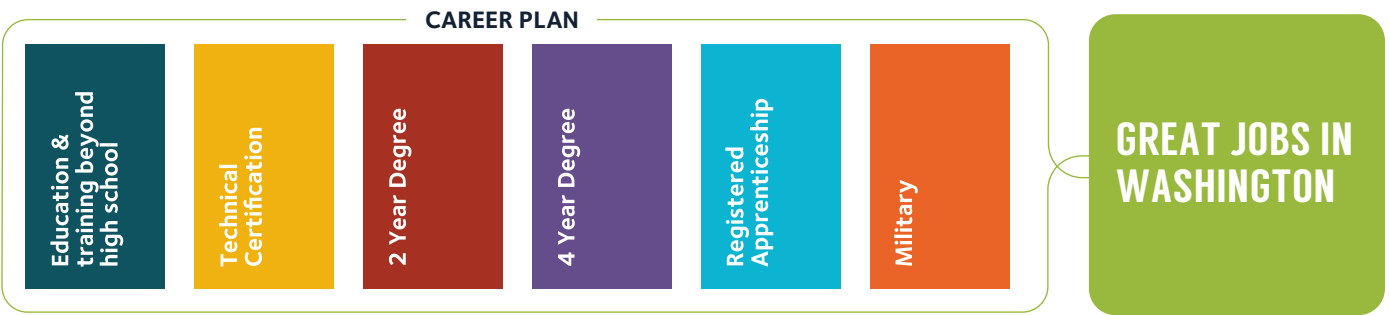
- **Baseline:** Conduct a scan of existing CCL programs to develop a baseline of programs, service areas and numbers served.
- **Barriers:** Collect and analyze data on barriers to accessing CCL opportunities for students, particularly those from rural and underserved communities, and make recommendations for overcoming those barriers.
- **Local Program Funding:** Review the progress of the 2017-19 Career Connect Washington Initiative and 11 local Career Connect Teams, as well as results and lessons learned. Explore and recommend public/private resource options to scale up the program to build momentum towards the Governor’s goal of connecting 100,000 youth to CCL opportunities.
- **Data Resources:** Identify ways to strengthen the capacity of the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) to provide frequent and timely process and outcome data on CCL. The strategic plan should produce a strong, consistent data set for the system to make collective decisions.
- **Industry Sector Partnerships:** Charge strategic industry sectors to develop partnerships (business, labor, educators, government) to map career pathways in high wage, high demand occupations, with multiple entry points and credentials that are valued in the marketplace. Each sector partnership should recommend policies that will facilitate CCL engagement of businesses in their respective sectors over the long term.
- **Recommendations:** Develop detailed recommendations, including targeted metrics, to encourage industry engagement in the state’s envisioned CCL system; a strategy to continue engagement with various industry sectors to identify changing conditions and trends in their respective workforces; development of a sustainable funding strategy; and a governance structure that recognizes the private sector as a co-investor of the talent pipeline.

#### FUTURE IMPACTS

A baseline of programs and participants, and valid and relevant performance data, will provide critical information to help direct investment in the CCL system to ensure maximum impact. Public sector stakeholders in Washington’s talent development pipeline will have identified – and started to address – policy/practice barriers for businesses seeking to develop CCL opportunities. Private sector stakeholders will see their needs identified in the plan with clear strategies to address those needs. The private sector will realize their role in the system and offer solutions, opportunities and support for the public sector to build new CCL opportunities; and recognize the power of those private investments.

## A PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR CAREER CONNECT LEARNING

WASHINGTON YOUTH ON THE PATH TO GREAT JOBS IN 2030



Source: Washington STEM



## Co-Chairs

Brad Smith, President – Microsoft

Perry England, Workforce Board Chair, VP of Building Performance – MacDonald-Miller Facility Solutions

## Members

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Phyllis Campbell, Chair, Pacific Northwest – JPMorgan Chase

Dave D'hondt, Chair – Washington Apprenticeship and Training Council

Maud Daudon, President & CEO – Seattle Metropolitan Chamber

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Susan Mullaney, President, Washington Region – Kaiser Permanente

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Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Sharon Tomiko Santos, WA State Representative, Chair – House Education Committee

Ardine Williams, Vice President – Human Resources for Worldwide Operations, Amazon

Hans Zeiger, WA State Senator, Chair – 2017 Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee